

Smith House
29 Remson Avenue, between George
and Welton Streets
New Brunswick
Middlesex County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-724

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

SMITH HOUSE

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Location: 29 Remson Avenue, between George and Welton Streets, New Brunswick, Middlesex County, New Jersey.

Present Owner: The estate of Mrs. Emily Smith; Executor, Mr. John McLaughlin.

Brief Statement of Significance: Built 1870-1880, this wood residence with a mansard roof, is typical of the period.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

- A. Date of Erection: 1870-1880.
- B. Notes on alterations and additions: Except for a small, one story addition to the rear, the building is apparently unaltered.

Prepared by Oliver K. Westling for the
New Jersey Historical Sites Evaluation
January 1960

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

Architectural character: This is a sturdy, wood residence with a mansard roof, typical of the period.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

The main body of the house is two stories high with a third story within the Mansard roof and a high basement. There is a narrow wing at the rear center of the building and a one-story addition (apparently later) against the rear wall and one side of the narrow wing. Stepped out from and centered on the front elevation is a tower, three stories high, projecting through the main cornice, and capped by a mansard roof with a dormer on each of the four sides. The symmetry of the front facade is broken, and yet maintains some feeling of balance. This was done by changing the level of the main cornice flanking the tower, constructing a two-story bay window on the right side, and heavily balustraded terrace on the left side. The first floor of the tower contains a porch, approached by six wooden steps with heavy, faceted, turned balusters, one to each step, with large hand rails which turn out at the

bottom to heavy, faceted and turned newel posts. The porch has arched openings on three sides, one leading to the balustraded terrace. Above the main arch is a moulded and bracketed balcony with a balustrade of turned balusters and square, paneled, corner posts with turned finials. Opening on this balcony is a pair of narrow, circle head windows, enframed and surmounted by a bracketed segmental pediment. The third floor of the tower has two, separate, narrow windows with similar pediments. The cornice of the tower is similar to the main cornice, having heavy brackets at the ends and center, with small brackets between. Above the cornice is a circle head dormer window in the mansard roof of the tower. It is flanked by sawn, pierced brackets and topped by a segmental pediment similar to that of the windows below. The bay window to the right of the tower is three-sided and forms a continuous unit from grade to the frieze of the main cornice. The basement portion is brick with wood frames and sash. The first floor portion has three long windows (floor to ceiling) with a rather simple cornice and frieze, capped with a metal roof, curving back convexly to the smaller second floor of the bay window. At the top of the bay window is a bracketed cornice and a metal roof that slopes up to the house at the under side of the frieze of the main cornice. There are three windows on each floor of the bay window. To the left of the tower is a pair of long windows (to the floor) within a frame capped by a relatively plain, bracketed head and a concavely sloped metal roof to the house. On center with this window at the second floor is a pair of narrower windows within a frame and ornately shaped pediments. Attention has been given to the vertical axis throughout the exterior design, and much effort has been applied to break up repetition in both plan and detail and yet keep a balanced feeling to the whole. All windows have louvered shutters.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. The entrance hall is floored in oak laid in herringbone fashion with mahogany strips at the border.
2. Stairway: The main stair has a heavy railing with a newel post which has both turned sections, and a four-sided center section which is pierced and hollow. A heavy railing begins flush with the turned cap of the newel post. There are two turned balusters per tread.
3. Trim: The trim is heavily moulded with paneled undersills in some rooms.
4. Ceilings: Ceilings are plaster with run plaster cornices and ornamental center cartouches in the principal rooms.

5. Mantels: The mantels are carved marble in a somewhat classic manner with marble hearths.

Prepared by George Brokaw Howell
Architect, Rutgers University (ret.)
New Brunswick, New Jersey
December 1960